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NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Kempthorne and Public Health Experts Team Up to Address Idaho's Growing Fitness and Nutrition Crisis

Governor Dirk Kempthorne will lead Idaho health experts and community leaders in the fight against inactivity and poor nutrition with the first Governor's Physical Activity and Nutrition Summit on Tuesday, June 21, in Boise. Over 400 Idaho health practitioners, educators, policymakers, and civic and business leaders will meet with national fitness and nutrition experts to identify strategies to improve Idahoans' diets and energize their lifestyles. The summit begins with registration and breakfast at 7 a.m. in the Jordan Ballroom of the Boise State University Student Union Building.

Inactivity and poor nutrition are reducing life expectancy and quality of life for an increasing number of Idahoans. According to Tom Tracy, manager of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Physical Activity and Nutrition Program, today's children may be the first generation ever to have a shorter lifespan than their parents. "Poor diets and sedentary lifestyles are truly reaching epidemic proportions in Idaho," Tracy says. "Between 1993 and 2003, the percentage of adults in Idaho who are overweight increased from 49 to 59 percent, and the percentage of adults who are obese nearly doubled during the same period from 13 to 22 percent."

Physical inactivity and poor nutrition also have dramatic effects on the state's budget. Tracy says three-fourths of health care spending in Idaho treats chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Many of these chronic diseases are caused or exacerbated by a lack of exercise and unhealthy eating habits. Moreover, he says, excess bodyweights result in medical expenditures of \$227 million in Idaho, half of which are funded by Medicare or Medicaid.

Tracy says the Governor's Summit is an important first step towards reversing these alarming trends. In addition to offering breakout sessions focusing on youths, adults, and seniors, the gathering will draw upon nationally recognized fitness and nutrition experts to answer questions and share results gleaned from other states, communities, schools, and businesses that are applying innovative solutions to public health challenges.

Gov. Kempthorne, who has made the state's children his number-one priority by declaring the "Generation of the Child" to ensure Idaho children are healthy and well educated, will deliver the keynote address at 1 p.m. Other featured speakers include:

- **Casey Hannan, M.P.H.** – policy director for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's division of nutrition and physical activity in Atlanta, Georgia.
- **Steven N. Blair, P.E.D.** – president and CEO of The Cooper Institute, a Dallas, Texas-based nonprofit research and education center focusing on the relationship between lifestyle and health.
- **Catrine Tudor-Locke, Ph.D.** – an assistant professor of health promotion in Arizona State University's Department of Exercise and Wellness who focuses on understanding and addressing the problems associated with sedentary lifestyles.
- **Joanne Ikeda, M.A., R.D.** – co-director of the Center for Weight and Health at the University of California, Berkeley, a nutrition education specialist at the school's cooperative extension, and a leading expert on pediatric obesity and the dietary practices of ethnic and immigrant populations.
- **James O. Hill, Ph.D.** – co-founder and chair of America On the Move (a national campaign to inspire Americans to choose health lifestyles), director of the National Institutes of Health's Center for Human Nutrition, and professor of pediatrics and medicine at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver, Colo.
- **Reed Humphrey, P.T., Ph.D.** – professor of physical therapy at Idaho State University, who recently completed a four-year term as the U.S. cardiovascular delegate to and head of the World Council for Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. He co-founded Idaho on the Move and served as the chair of this America On the Move affiliate until 2005.

Registration information and a complete schedule are available online at www.summitreg.org.

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(Editors: For more information about the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Physical Activity and Nutrition Program, please contact Tom Tracy at (208) 334-4951.)